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**Brown, Christy**

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**From:** Hedeem, Roberta  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 05, 2014 7:54 AM  
**To:** Hastings, Janis; Arrigoni, Holly; Brown, Christy; Castrilli, Laura; Fisher, Carla; Hedeem, Roberta; Meyer, Linda; Palumbo, Janice  
**Subject:** FW: Petroleum News' News Bulletin Service - February 04, 2014  
**Importance:** High

Wow. Flint Hills is closing down the North Pole Refinery, in part due to cleanup costs.  
-r

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Roberta Hedeem  
U.S.EPA Region 10  
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900  
Seattle, WA 98101

206/553-0201  
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**From:** Smith, Marla J.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 05, 2014 7:10 AM  
**To:** Wernitz, James; Carr, Matt; Combes, Marcia; Cool, Richard; Curtis, Jennifer; Cutler, Thor; Fidis, Alexander; Fordham, Tami; Godsey, Cindi; Greaves, Natasha; Hedeem, Roberta; Jen, Mark; Latier, Andrea; Martin, Gayle; Mayers, Timothy; Pavitt, John; Seyfried, Erin; Shaw, Hanh; Smith, Marla J.; Soderlund, Dianne; Stoddard, Jamey  
**Subject:** FW: Petroleum News' News Bulletin Service - February 04, 2014  
**Importance:** High

Marla

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**From:** Petroleum News [<mailto:circulation@petroleumnews.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 04, 2014 4:40 PM  
**To:** Smith, Marla J.  
**Subject:** Petroleum News' News Bulletin Service - February 04, 2014

TO: Marla Smith account= 28387

Petroleum News' News Bulletin Service - February 04, 2014

If you cannot read this news bulletin, paste the following link into your browser:

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## NEWS BULLETIN

February 04, 2014 --- Vol. 20, No. 10

February 2014

### Flint Hills shutting down North Pole refinery

Flint Hills Resources Alaska said this afternoon that it will cease crude oil processing at its North Pole refinery in the next few months, shutting down the extraction unit at the refinery May 1, ending gasoline production.

The company said crude unit No. 2 would shut down shortly thereafter, no later than June 1, ending production of jet fuel and all other refined products.

Mike Brose, vice president of Flint Hills Resources Alaska and manager of the refinery, blamed difficult refiner marketing conditions combined with the costs of addressing soil and groundwater contamination "that was caused when Williams owned the refinery and the State of Alaska owned the land underneath it."

-Kristen Nelson

See story in Feb. 9 issue, available online at 11 a.m. Friday, Feb. 7, at [www.PetroleumNews.com](http://www.PetroleumNews.com)

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# EPA cites VECO, Mapco for toxic waste violations

Complaints ask fines totalling \$170,000

The Associated Press

FAIRBANKS — The Environmental Protection Agency has filed three hazardous waste complaints and compliance orders against Mapco Petroleum Inc. and VECO Inc., with recommended fines totalling \$170,000.

"acutely toxic waste," the EPA said.

The firms were also cited for failing to conduct personnel training on handling and working with hazardous wastes, and with failing to develop and implement a hazardous waste contingency plan.

"We think they're off base on a lot of things, but we're still going over the complaint and still formulating our response," VECO President Pete Leathard said Thursday.

He said some discrepancies in responses by VECO personnel were probably due to the rotating schedule workers have at the Deadhorse facility.

"I think when the inspectors were out there, they talked to people who had just come on shift and may not have been fully up to date on what we were doing," Leathard said.

*Both companies were cited for running operations that use, generate or dispose of hazardous wastes without obtaining a hazardous waste permit, and without proper notification.*

Two of the complaints were filed against Mapco's North Pole refinery and one was filed against VECO's oilfield support facility at Deadhorse.

Both companies were cited for hazardous waste violations of the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. EPA has recommended VECO pay a fine of \$80,000, and \$90,000 by Mapco.

The agency has ordered both companies to begin immediate compliance, to respond within 15 to 60 days depending on the offense, or face possible daily fines ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000.

Charles Findley, director of EPA's Region 10 Hazardous Waste Division, encouraged both companies to consider a settlement.

Both companies were cited for running operations that use, generate or dispose of hazardous wastes without first submitting a permit application, obtaining a hazardous waste permit, and without proper notification.

Mapco and VECO each received numerous citations for failing to label and date containers of hazardous waste and for failing to maintain proper records related to hazardous waste generation, storage and disposal. At Mapco's

*"We think they're off base on a lot of things, but we're still going over the complaint and still formulating our response."*

— VECO President Pete Leathard

Mapco was cited for allowing hazardous wastes to be leaked or spilled from the refinery's sump system to the ground.

Mapco was cited for operating a hazardous waste storage and/or disposal facility without having a written closure plan and without estimating closure costs.

EPA said releases of hazardous wastes, such as trichloroethane and methylene chloride, have occurred at Mapco's North Pole refinery, with fuel spills over a number of years cumulatively amounting to more than 150,000 gallons.

The EPA claimed Mapco drained several drums of caustic material into the refinery's sump system and from there into

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DAILY NEWS 2/19/88

B-2 Friday, September 4, 1987, The Anchorage Times

# MAPCO defends clean-up efforts

By Sue Cross  
Associated Press

JUNEAU — Officials at MAPCO Petroleum Alaska Co. and the Department of Environmental Conservation are defending their cooperative efforts to clean up oil spills and other pollution at MAPCO's North Pole refinery.

An ombudsman's report issued Wednesday took the department to task on several points, including what acting Ombudsman Bruce Aronson believes is overuse of consent agreements instead of tougher enforcement measures.

Such agreements may be meant to speed things up, but they usually result in delays, Aronson said.

But DEC Commissioner Dennis Kelso says consent agreements are used because they are the most efficient.

State attorneys believe voluntary compliance will work better than taking MAPCO to court, Kelso said Thursday.

"Their idea is, we do better if we get the cleanup going, we make sure MAPCO has to pick up all the costs, we make sure they're committed to making operational changes," Kelso said. "It doesn't do us nearly as much good to seek penalties for past acts as it does to clean up and make sure these things don't happen again."

The current consent agreement with MAPCO is enforcea-

ble in court, if necessary, and the state can seek penalties for past or future violations if MAPCO fails to meet DEC requirements, Kelso said.

The commissioner also said Aronson's report might be misleading when it suggests the DEC should try to collect more money from MAPCO through penalties or to pay for the cleanup.

"MAPCO is paying for the monitoring, the cleanup, the environmental audit, the developing of a new contingency plan and implementing it, and any other measures that might come out of the environmental audit," Kelso said.

He and MAPCO Vice Presi-

dent Buki Wright also defended the cooperative efforts to clean up oil spills.

Aronson had cited a possible conflict of interest in MAPCO's hiring of consultants to direct the cleanup. The ombudsman said the consultants should be paid by the state, which then would recover its costs from MAPCO.

"I don't think that's necessary," Wright said. "The DEC has had veto power over that (hiring)."

MAPCO either develops a plan for actions and gets the DEC's approval, or complies with a list of actions mandated by the state, Wright said.

"In either case, the DEC's been calling the shots," he said.

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Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Thursday, September 3, 1987—5

## Ombudsman critical DEC still found lax on Mapco

By SUE CROSS

Associated Press Writer

JUNEAU—Recent attempts to crack down on pollution at Mapco Petroleum Alaska Co.'s North Pole refinery don't change an earlier finding that environmental officials were lax in enforcing state standards there, the state ombudsman says.

In a report issued Wednesday, state acting Ombudsman Bruce Aronson reinforced much of an earlier draft report that was sharply critical of the Department of Environmental Conservation.

"While DEC's enforcement efforts at the refinery during recent months are encouraging, I think the record shows that DEC's earlier activities regarding oil spill cleanup enforcement and drinking water monitoring at the refinery were inadequate, and as a result, the agency may have contributed to the endangerment of public health and to the refinery's ground

pollution problem," Aronson wrote in a letter to DEC Commissioner Dennis Kelso.

Aronson also outlined what he believes are several continuing problems with DEC procedures.

The report was delivered to Kelso late Wednesday, and the commissioner said he could not comment until he had a chance to read it.

Mapco's spokesman, Vice President Buki Wright, was out of town Wednesday and no one else at Mapco is authorized to talk to the media, according to a woman who answered the company phone. This morning Wright was in meetings and not available to give comments to the Daily News-Miner by press time.

In his report, Aronson said he and Kelso have agreed on eight of 11 suggestions for rectifying the Mapco situation and improving DEC's procedures. The department already is implementing six of the

(See MAPCO, Page 8)

### MAPCO

(Continued from page 1)

recommendations, Aronson said.

He and Kelso still disagree over three points—recovery of cleanup costs, conflict of interest and record-keeping—plus some general policies.

The ombudsman believes DEC should be more bullish about imposing penalties for Mapco oil spills and recovering cleanup costs from the company.

Kelso has agreed to consider the recommendation. But he does not plan to charge Mapco for cleanup costs or for up to \$25,000 the state is paying a hydrogeologist to help locate underground contamination, according to Aronson.

The ombudsman cites the DEC's position that a December 1986 con-

sent agreement between the department and Mapco "does not broadly waive DEC's rights to seek penalties in the future if conditions are violated by Mapco, or for past and future violations."

But Aronson said it appears DEC has agreed not to seek penalties and damages from Mapco for many of the 77 documented oil spills on state land leased by the refinery.

Under state law, Mapco should bear full financial responsibility for spill cleanup, Aronson said.

The DEC also has used informal compliance agreements to the detriment of cleanup efforts, Aronson said.

"There is an apparent pattern developing where DEC attempts to

achieve a voluntary agreement with a violator, but through delays, compliance ultimately takes longer than if DEC had used stronger formal enforcement actions," he said.

The DEC believes cleanups are conducted more quickly if they are voluntary, Aronson said.

He also objects to DEC's position that it supervises cleanup efforts at Mapco, even though consultants doing the work are hired, paid by and report to Mapco.

Mapco should pay the consultants, but they should be hired by and report to DEC, Aronson said.

The ombudsman also repeated his call for a revision of the state's drinking water standards. Kelso has said the state never committed to a revision, but Aronson cited an earlier case and a letter from former Commissioner Bill Ross that said drinking water regulations should be updated.

The ombudsman found that Mapco employees quit drinking water from company wells because of suspected pollution six months before the DEC discovered the petroleum-contaminated water contained benzene, a highly toxic chemical.

Aronson also called for better DEC record-keeping, and addressed several disputes of fact brought up after the preliminary report became public last spring.

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# Ombudsman faults state for pollution

## Report concludes DEC failed to enforce standards at refinery

By ROSEMARIE ALEXANDER  
The Associated Press

JUNEAU — A state ombudsman's report says employees at the North Pole MAPCO Petroleum Alaska Co. may have been drinking benzene-contaminated water because the state Department of Environmental Conservation failed to enforce pollution standards.

Department officials say they disagree with some of the report's conclusions.

A MAPCO official said he would not comment on the report.

The May 22 ombudsman's report says the state may have contributed to the refinery's ground pollution problems and endangered public health because the DEC did not monitor pollution discharges and cleanup, toxic waste disposal, or test drinking water systems at the plant.

"In the fall of 1986, tests showed at least one source of

the drinking water, the well at the truck rack, had benzene in quantities characterized by the EPA as 'acutely toxic,' Robert Walton, acting ombudsman, said in the draft report.

Numerous spills had occurred in the area where the well was drilled, but records do not indicate how long the well was used before tests determined it was contaminated, Walton said.

"It appears that DEC suffered from the 'left hand-right hand' syndrome as the drinking water staff and oil spill staff had not compared notes," Walton said.

Environmental Conservation Commissioner Dennis Kelso said he was concerned about the inaccuracies in the draft.

"We believe that the draft report contains factual errors, omissions and inaccurate representations. It reflects a serious misunderstanding of the

See Back Page, DEC

## DEC: Ombudsman says department failed to enforce pollution standards

Continued from Page A-1

legal mechanism of our compliance order with MAPCO," Kelso said in a prepared statement.

"We are committed to resolving the problems at the facility," he said.

Kelso was in Seattle Wednesday. A department spokesman said he could not be reached for comment and issued the statement a few hours later.

Most of the alleged violations occurred before Kelso

took over the department in January.

The North Pole refinery is operated by a subsidiary of MAPCO Inc., a Tulsa, Okla.-based resources company. MAPCO has coal mines, gas plants, oil production facilities and pipelines.

Buki Wright, a MAPCO vice president, said the ombudsman's charges did not involve MAPCO.

"It's an issue between the ombudsman, the DEC and the governor. They need to sort it out and decide what they're going to do," Wright said.

State law requires all oil refineries to have a state-approved oil discharge contingency plan.

Walton said the department never notified MAPCO officials that the refinery's plan — submitted in 1982 — was not acceptable.

"There have been at least 77 reported oil spills at the refinery which have deposited 151,000 gallons of product on to the ground; 23 of these spills have occurred since MAPCO submitted its contingency plan to DEC for approval," Walton said.

By failing to enforce environmental regulations, the department appears to have waived the state's right to seek penalties for past violations, Walton said.

The department also permitted MAPCO to contract with consultants to verify that the refinery complies with state regulations, Walton said.

The ombudsman's report comes on the heels of an Environmental Protection Agency letter to the North Pole refinery, saying it had failed to comply with federal

requirements for storing hazardous wastes.

The May 15 letter was based on a surprise March inspection of the plant by the state Department of Environmental Conservation on behalf of the EPA.

Prior to the agency's letter, U.S. Senator Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, called for a federal investigation of toxic waste disposal methods at the plant.

Metzenbaum is chairman of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Energy Regulation and Conservation.

His request came five weeks after the state oil and gas division investigated possible dumping of toxic wastes into the trans-Alaska oil pipeline.

The agency did not conclude that any dumping took place.

But the report said even assuming a worst-case scenario, chemicals put in the \$9 billion pipeline would have had little effect on the line's safety or performance.

MAPCO officials said they never dumped waste into the pipeline.



## EPA chides Mapco in hazardous wastes case

FAIRBANKS (AP) — One federal agency says Mapco Petroleum Alaska Company must improve its handling of hazardous wastes at its oil refinery in North Pole, and another agency says the company should rehire an employee who helped investigators look into the waste handling.

The Environmental Protection Agency sent a letter Friday to Mapco officials, saying the North Pole refinery has failed to comply with federal requirements for storing hazardous wastes, it was reported by the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner.

The letter was based on a surprise inspection of the plant conducted two months ago for the EPA by the state Department of Environmental Conservation. The inspection was prompted by allegations that the refinery was dumping hazardous wastes into the trans-Alaska oil pipeline.

Charles Findley, the EPA's regional director for hazardous waste, said the agency may

take enforcement actions against Mapco after finishing its study of the inspection and other findings. He urged the company to take immediate action on inadequacies in its handling of hazardous wastes.

"Hazardous wastes stored on-site were not properly marked, dated, or inspected," Findley wrote.

"Improper storage of ignitable, corrosive, and reactive wastes represent a potential fire and explosion hazard," Findley wrote.

The EPA asked the company for additional information about its hazardous waste storage and disposal systems, including records on any waste that may have been dumped into the trans-Alaska pipeline.

Mapco has 30 days to comply with the EPA's request, Findley said.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Labor Department has told Mapco it should rehire an employee who cooperated with investigators looking

into the company's handling of hazardous wastes.

On April 5, Jill Albrecht, a lab technician and chemist at the refinery, sent labor officials a letter requesting protection from harassment by company officials. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the Toxic Substances Control Act prohibit employers from firing workers for helping to expose violations.

The News-Miner reported that sources familiar with Albrecht's situation said she was fired the same day her letter arrived at the Labor Department.

On May 5, the Labor Department notified Mapco that Albrecht was entitled to protection. "The employee should be restored to her previous position without loss of pay or job security," the department said in a letter.

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## Feds say Mapco should rehire fired employee

By **BILL KELDER**  
Staff Writer

Mapco Petroleum Co. wrongfully fired an employee of its North Pole Refinery early last month and should reinstate her to her job, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. The company is expected to appeal the finding.

On April 5, Mapco refinery lab technician/chemist Jill Albrecht sent a letter to Secretary of Labor William Brock requesting protection under the federal Resource Conservation and Reclamation Act and the Toxic Substances Control Act from harassment by the company. Sections of the acts protect employees from harassment for reporting irregularities regarding hazardous or toxic substances.

An employee must report the harassment within 30 days of termination by an employer to qualify for protection under the acts. Albrecht's case is one of the first to be considered by the Labor Department under the RCRA and TSCA acts.

In the letter, Albrecht claimed she was being harassed by Mapco officials because she was cooperating with "congressional investigators," and said she was being harassed by company officials for it. She also requested the labor department to investigate allegations the company was dumping hazardous and toxic substances into the trans-Alaska pipeline system.

Sources familiar with Albrecht's situation say she was fired by the company the same day her letter arrived at the Labor Department.

On May 5, the department notified Mapco through a letter that its investigation of the

Albrecht case revealed she was entitled to protection under the RCRA and TSCA laws and that Mapco officials were prohibited under those laws from firing her.

"... The employee should be restored to her previous position without loss of pay or job security," the letter stated.

Dennis Cook, a lawyer for Albrecht, confirmed the letter's existence and content, but declined further comment on the matter. Other sources close to the case said Friday evening Mapco had notified the department it would appeal the ruling.

"Congress cannot allow Mapco officials to resolve their toxic waste disposal problems by risking environmental damage, employee safety and damage to industrial facilities of petroleum refiners down stream," Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, said Friday in calling for a congressional probe of the company.

"I understand at least one Mapco employee has charged the company with discrimination and termination of employment as a result of that employee's cooperation with congressional investigators," he said.

While Metzenbaum did not name the employee in question, it is believed he was referring to Albrecht.

According to a DEC official familiar with the Mapco investigations, who asked not to be named, Albrecht was fired by the refinery the same day her letter to Brock arrived at the labor department.

Albrecht was in the hospital for planned surgery and could not be reached for comment.

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12—Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Saturday, May 16, 1987

# Mapco, DEC deny Metzenbaum's claims

By BILL KELDER  
Staff Writer

Gov. Steve Cowper and state Department of Environmental Conservation officials have denied claims made by U.S. Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, that the state agency has compromised its enforcement role of Mapco Petroleum Co.'s refinery through a close relationship with Mapco officials.

Cowper said the senator appears

to be acting "without complete information."

On Friday, Metzenbaum—in his role as chairman of the Senate subcommittee on energy regulation and conservation—requested a General Accounting Office investigation of allegations that Mapco was putting hazardous or toxic wastes into the trans-Alaska pipeline system.

In requesting the investigation, the Ohio Democrat also asked the

GAO to look into allegations that the enforcement role of the DEC was compromised by its close relationship with Mapco officials.

The GAO, which conducts congressional investigations, has formed a new special investigations unit that sources say has been informally looking into the Mapco situation for the past six weeks. These same sources believe it was this unit that provided Metzenbaum with information leading to his request for a formal GAO investigation.

"Sen. Metzenbaum's allegations about lax state enforcement at the Mapco oil refinery are misinformed at best, and flat-out irresponsible at worst," Cowper said in a prepared statement late Friday afternoon.

"Under this administration, the state Department of Environmental Conservation has been monitoring these problems at Mapco since they were brought to our attention. The department has required Mapco to clean up its spills and get a third-party audit of the situation, and continues to monitor the problems," Cowper said.

"As for allegations that toxic materials were dumped into the oil pipeline, DEC performed an unannounced on-site inspection of the refinery. As federal law requires, we have turned over our findings to the federal EPA for any criminal violations.

"Sen. Metzenbaum frequently criticizes what we do in Alaska without complete information. That appears to be the case here," the governor said.

"We've been aggressive and appropriate in our enforcement," DEC Commissioner Dennis Kelso said Friday.

Last December, Mapco signed a compliance order issued by DEC. Among other things, the order required Mapco to clean up, at its own expense, more than 100,000 gallons of fuel that had leaked or spilled at the North Pole refinery over a period of several years.

DEC officials said earlier this week the company has collected and retrieved more than 100,000 gallons of spilled fuel and other materials, and is currently retrieving in excess of 100 gallons a day of

liquids spilled at the refinery over the years.

Mapco is presently in the process of finalizing the parameters and details of an environmental audit required this summer under the compliance order.

The company has also advertised for an in-house environmental specialist and is believed to be in the final stages of its selection process for that position.

Upon hearing of Metzenbaum's allegations and request for an investigation, Mapco Alaska Vice President Buki Wright said Friday afternoon the company was mystified at the senator's action.

"Officially, we at Mapco have four things to say," Wright said:

"One, we do not handle toxic wastes at the North Pole refinery.

"Two, we have not pumped toxic wastes into the (trans-Alaska) pipeline.

"Three, we have not pumped hazardous wastes into the pipeline.

"Four, the employee who was terminated was let go for a violation of management policy. The termination had nothing to do with these allegations."



# EPA raps Mapco on wastes policy

By BILL KELDER  
Staff Writer

Mapco Petroleum Alaska Co.'s North Pole refinery has failed to comply with federal requirements governing the management of recyclable materials, or hazardous wastes, and has stored "acutely toxic waste" and characteristic waste without a proper permit, according to an Environmental Protection Agency letter.

Late Friday, EPA Region X hazardous waste director Charles Findley sent a letter to Mapco refinery manager Gerald Fritz regarding the inspection.

(Continued from page 1)

on these findings after our evaluation is complete," the letter stated.

Findley wrote that Mapco's North Pole refinery has not complied with requirements governing the management of recyclable materials, and that the refinery "has generated and accumulated RCRA hazardous wastes in sufficient quantities to require compliance" with federal standards, but has not done so. "Hazardous wastes stored on-site were not properly marked, dated or inspected."

Two months ago, the EPA, responding to allegations the refinery was placing hazardous or toxic wastes into the trans-Alaska Pipeline, asked the DEC to conduct an unannounced inspection of the refinery under the federal Resource Conservation and Reclamation Act, or RCRA. DEC did so, and forwarded the inspection results to EPA's Anchorage office, which in turn forwarded them to its Seattle Region X office.

In his letter, Findley said the refinery has stored more than one kilogram of "acutely toxic waste and more than 1,000 kilograms of characteristic waste for more than 90 days without a permit," and out of compliance with the majority of the treatment, storage and disposal standards.

"Improper storage of ignitable, corrosive and reactive wastes represents a potential fire and explosion hazard," Findley wrote.

To complete its evaluation of the refinery, EPA asked the company for additional information, including:

- Any and all information on any hazardous materials considered to be recycled at the Mapco North Pole Refinery, including placement into the trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS).
- Any and all information on hazardous waste neutralization activities occurring at the Mapco refinery.
- Any and all information on the

Gov. Steve Cowper responds to allegations by Sen. Howard M. Zenbaum that the DEC has compromised its enforcement role by being too close to Mapco officials; and the U.S. Dept. of Labor tells Mapco to reinstate a wrongfully fired employee. Page 3.

"While we continue to evaluate the inspection and other findings, it is important to bring to your attention the following issues which should be addressed immediately. Enforcement action may be taken (See MAPCO, Page 8)

use of the refinery's sump system.

- The quantity and types of all hazardous wastes and hazardous materials placed into the facility sump system or associated piping system for recycling, neutralization and/or disposal on an annual basis and the disposition of these wastes and materials.

- Any and all information on disposal practices and disposal locations for all used fuel filter cartridges.

- Any and all information on any used oil fuel activities occurring at the refinery.

- Any and all information on hazardous material and product spills occurring at the refinery since operations began.

Any and all information on underground storage tanks at the facility as of Jan. 1, 1974, including copies of any notifications provided to the state by May 8, 1986.

According to the letter, Mapco has 30 days to comply with the EPA request. Failure to do so may subject the company to enforcement actions, including the assessment of penalties.

"You should also be aware that knowing falsification of any information provided pursuant to this request may be a criminal violation..." Findley wrote.

The RCRA act governs the handling, transportation and disposal of hazardous materials. The federal Toxic Substance Control Act, or TSCA, governs the handling, transportation and disposal of toxic materials.

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"Improper storage of ignitable, corrosive and reactive wastes represents a potential fire and explosion hazard," Findley wrote.

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- Any and all information on any hazardous materials considered to be recycled at the Mapco North Pole Refinery, including placement into the trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS).

- Any and all information on hazardous waste neutralization activities occurring at the Mapco refinery.

- Any and all information on the

Gov. Steve Cowper responds to allegations by Sen. Howard M. Zenbaum that the DEC has compromised its enforcement role by being too close to Mapco officials; and the U.S. Dept. of Labor tells Mapco to reinstate a wrongfully fired employee. Page 3.

"While we continue to evaluate the inspection and other findings, it is important to bring to your attention the following issues which should be addressed immediately. Enforcement action may be taken (See MAPCO, Page 8)

use of the refinery's sump system.

- The quantity and types of all hazardous wastes and hazardous materials placed into the facility sump system or associated piping system for recycling, neutralization and/or disposal on an annual basis and the disposition of these wastes and materials.

- Any and all information on disposal practices and disposal locations for all used fuel filter cartridges.

- Any and all information on any used oil fuel activities occurring at the refinery.

- Any and all information on hazardous material and product spills occurring at the refinery since operations began.

Any and all information on underground storage tanks at the facility as of Jan. 1, 1974, including copies of any notifications provided to the state by May 8, 1986.

According to the letter, Mapco has 30 days to comply with the EPA request. Failure to do so may subject the company to enforcement actions, including the assessment of penalties.

"You should also be aware that knowing falsification of any information provided pursuant to this request may be a criminal violation. . .," Findley wrote.

The RCRA act governs the handling, transportation and disposal of hazardous materials. The federal Toxic Substance Control Act, or TSCA, governs the handling, transportation and disposal of toxic materials.

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12—Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Saturday, May 16, 1987



# Mapco, DEC deny Metzenbaum's claims

By BILL KELDER  
Staff Writer

Gov. Steve Cowper and state Department of Environmental Conservation officials have denied claims made by U.S. Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, that the state agency has compromised its enforcement role of Mapco Petroleum Co.'s North Pole refinery through a close relationship with Mapco officials.

Cowper said the senator appears

to be acting "without complete information."

On Friday, Metzenbaum—in his role as chairman of the Senate subcommittee on energy regulation and conservation—requested a General Accounting Office investigation of allegations that Mapco was putting hazardous or toxic wastes into the trans-Alaska pipeline system.

In requesting the investigation, the Ohio Democrat also asked the

GAO to look into allegations that the enforcement role of the DEC was compromised by its close relationship with Mapco officials.

The GAO, which conducts congressional investigations, has formed a new special investigations unit that sources say has been informally looking into the Mapco situation for the past six weeks. These same sources believe it was this unit that provided Metzenbaum with information leading to his request for a formal GAO investigation.

"Sen. Metzenbaum's allegations about lax state enforcement at the Mapco oil refinery are misinformed at best, and flat-out irresponsible at worst," Cowper said in a prepared statement late Friday afternoon.

"Under this administration, the state Department of Environmental Conservation has been monitoring these problems at Mapco since they were brought to our attention. The department has required Mapco to clean up its spills and get a third-party audit of the situation, and continues to monitor the problems," Cowper said.

"As for allegations that toxic materials were dumped into the oil pipeline, DEC performed an unannounced on-site inspection of the refinery. As federal law requires, we have turned over our findings to the federal EPA for any criminal violations.

"Sen. Metzenbaum frequently criticizes what we do in Alaska without complete information. That appears to be the case here," the governor said.

"We've been aggressive and appropriate in our enforcement," DEC Commissioner Dennis Kelso said Friday.

Last December, Mapco signed a compliance order issued by DEC. Among other things, the order required Mapco to clean up, at its own expense, more than 100,000 gallons of fuel that had leaked or spilled at the North Pole refinery over a period of several years.

DEC officials said earlier this week the company has collected and retrieved more than 100,000 gallons of spilled fuel and other materials, and is currently retrieving in excess of 100 gallons a day of

liquids spilled at the refinery over the years.

Mapco is presently in the process of finalizing the parameters and details of an environmental audit required this summer under the compliance order.

The company has also advertised for an in-house environmental specialist and is believed to be in the final stages of its selection process for that position.

Upon hearing of Metzenbaum's allegations and request for an investigation, Mapco Alaska Vice President Buki Wright said Friday afternoon the company was mystified at the senator's action.

"Officially, we at Mapco have four things to say," Wright said:

"One, we do not handle toxic wastes at the North Pole refinery.

"Two, we have not pumped toxic wastes into the (trans-Alaska) pipeline.

"Three, we have not pumped hazardous wastes into the pipeline.

"Four, the employee who was terminated was let go for a violation of management policy. The termination had nothing to do with these allegations."

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12—Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Friday, May 15, 1987

## Federal probe of Mapco practice urged

WASHINGTON (AP)—The chairman of the Senate subcommittee on energy regulation and conservation wants a federal investigation of toxic waste disposal practices at the Mapco North Pole refinery.

U.S. Sen. Howard Metzenbaum said there are serious allegations that chemical additives were being improperly handled, stored and disposed of at the refinery.

Metzenbaum's request comes five weeks after the state Division of Oil and Gas concluded its own investigation of possible dumping of toxic wastes into the \$9 billion pipeline.

If hazardous wastes had been dumped into the pipeline, then the chemicals would have been so diluted they would have had little — if any — effect on the safety or performance of the pipeline, the agency said.

While not concluding any such dumping took place, state officials decided to assume they had in order to envision a worst-case scenario.

Mapco officials have denied doing so.

But in a letter to the Governor.  
(See MAPCO, Back Page)

## MAPCO

(Continued from page 1)

ment Accounting Office, Metzenbaum said the substances could be entering the trans-Alaska oil pipeline and could pose safety risks.

"Congress cannot allow Mapco officials to resolve their toxic waste disposal problems by risking environmental damage, employee safety and damage to the industrial facilities of petroleum refiners downstream," Metzenbaum said.

The Ohio Democrat also called for special protection for witnesses, citing allegations of witness intimidation.

"I understand at least one Mapco employee has charged the company with discrimination and termination of employment as a result of that employee's cooperation with congressional investigators ... We expect witnesses to cooperate fully with investigators knowing that their rights will be protected by Congress and the Department of Labor."

Metzenbaum also asked the GAO to probe allegations that the enforcement role of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation was compromised by its close relationship with Mapco officials.

DEC Commissioner Dennis Kelso denied Metzenbaum's assertions that the agency has been lax in its dealings with the refinery.

"We've been aggressive and appropriate in our enforcement," Kelso said today.

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Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska Monday, May 11, 1987

# DEC presses Mapco on environmental audit work

The state Department of Environmental Conservation has instructed Mapco Petroleum Co. to fine tune the scope of work Mapco is to complete in an environmental audit the DEC required the company to conduct as a result of fuel spills at Mapco's North Pole refinery.

In December 1986, Mapco officials signed a compliance order issued by the DEC. The order required Mapco to monitor and clean up more than 100,000 gallons in fuel and other spills occurring at the refinery over a period of several years.

One element of the compliance order requires Mapco to hire a firm to conduct an environmental audit at the refinery this summer. Mapco was to submit its proposed scope of

work for that audit on April 16 and did so "right on deadline," according to DEC's Dick Warren.

While Mapco proposed a firm to conduct the audit, DEC officials were not impressed with the team the firm would use on the audit.

In a May 4 letter to Mapco engineering manager Dave Rowse, DEC Northern Region Environmental Supervisor Larry Dietrick told the company as much and also submitted a more detailed scope of work to be followed on the audit.

"We have some reservations with the audit team the firm has nominated to perform the environmental audit," wrote Dietrick.

Though the firm in question was not named, Dietrick said the diverse responsibilities required by the audit meant the firm's auditing

team should be selected from several disciplines "... such as refinery operations managers, hydrologists, engineers, and environmental specialists, who are familiar with environmental issues. Based on the resumes submitted, the audit team leader ... has no prior experiences with environmental audits," Dietrick wrote.

He also reminded Rowse that Mapco "must demonstrate ... their commitment to corrective action based on the audit findings."

He said the company must also expand its audit scope to include, but not be limited to, 36 specific items under three broad categories. Dietrick listed 14 items under the category requiring Mapco to

improve or correct inadequate product handling procedures at its refinery. Among the items were that Mapco identify all fuel transfer locations, review volume control inspection procedures, evaluate procedures for leak detection, and evaluate the efficiency and thoroughness of its fuel spill cleanup procedures.

Dietrick listed six items relating to "abnormally high concentrations of hydrocarbons in the contaminated water holding pond" at the refinery. Among them that Mapco identify sources of the contamination and water sources to the storm water holding pond, and that the company evaluate plant systems controlling discharges to the pond.

Mapco is also required to identify the source of and reasons for the presence of (fuel or oil) product in the ground and develop corrective actions to avoid recurrences, wrote Dietrick, listing 16 requirements in this area for Mapco to include in its audit work scope. Among them the company is required to evaluate and monitor procedures for detecting leaks, evaluate testing procedures, evaluate existing pollution control systems, identify all above and underground tanks and service lines, and verify the integrity of sumps, pipelines, tanks (above and below ground) dyke walls and liners to determine

if subsurface contamination is ongoing.

Dick Warren, Pete McGee and other DEC northern region officials said Thursday the letter does not mean that Mapco is not trying to comply with the consent agreement.

"Mapco is complying, we just felt their initial proposal regarding the environmental audit needed a little fine tuning," said Warren. He said DEC and Mapco officials are working together to see that all past spills at the North Pole refinery are cleaned up and that the opportunity for future spills is eliminated as much as humanly possible.

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# Former Mapco employee asks labor secretary for help

By BILL KELDER  
Staff Writer

A former Mapco lab technician has written U.S. Labor Secretary William Brock seeking protection against discrimination and harassment that she claims is being conducted by her former employer because she talked with FBI and U.S. Senate investigators regarding hazardous wastes at the company's North Pole refinery.

Until Monday, Jill Albrecht was a chemist/lab technician with Mapco. As such, she was required to maintain compliance with all federal, state and Mapco policies regarding the safe and legal disposal of all substances deemed hazardous or otherwise requiring special handling.

Albrecht began her work at Mapco as an entry level clerk but a few years later transferred to the refinery's lab as an entry level technician. During an organizational re-vamping of the lab, the technician title was changed to chemist.

When contacted by telephone Thursday, Albrecht declined com-

ment on advice of her attorney, Dennis Cook.

Several weeks ago, the federal Environmental Protection Agency confirmed it was investigating allegations of hazardous waste violations at Mapco's North Pole refinery. Materials gathered by a state Department of Environmental Conservation inspection at the refinery have been passed to the EPA's Region X offices in Seattle. DEC conducted the inspection at EPA's request.

But in her letter to Brock dated April 5, Albrecht claims she was placed on probation by Mapco's management when she made inquiries into the disposal of hazardous "wastes, acid, toxic, corrosive and some unknown substances being blended together into a sump injecting into the crude stream of the TAPS" (trans-Alaska pipeline system).

The News-Miner's copy of the letter was not obtained through Albrecht or her attorney.

Mapco Alaska Vice President Buki Wright said Friday Albrecht had never brought her concerns "to

the attention of her supervisor or the refinery manager. If she had, which she clearly did not, she would have learned that her concerns were groundless," Wright said.

He said "Albrecht could not have been put on probation because of concerns about hazardous materials because we never knew she had any such concerns, she didn't come to us with them." He did not say why or when Albrecht was put on probation. "I can confirm that Jill Albrecht is no longer employed at the refinery," Wright said.

While still on probation, Albrecht wrote, she had "received numerous phone calls at all hours of the night threatening my life if 'you don't stop talking to the press.'" In the letter she says she never talked to the press. "I have only answered the questions of the FBI and U.S. Senate investigator?"

Albrecht wrote she had been put on six-month probation by the refinery shortly before writing the April 5 letter to Brock.

Wright said he had no idea Albrecht was talking to anyone. "This is the first time I've heard any mention of the FBI or any senate investigator, if indeed one exists."

Beginning March 13, 1987, Albrecht said in the Brock letter,

she discovered someone following her car where ever she went. She claimed the tailing vehicle caused her to have a "serious auto accident" involving another woman and her two children. She reported the vehicle to North Pole police. "I understand they have identified the party and since provided me protection as best they can between their other duties. I have become a

prisoner in my home and fearful while at the refinery," Albrecht wrote.

But officer H. Harrison of the North Pole police said Friday "we have no record of her contacting us at all." He said it may have been possible that Albrecht talked with a North Pole police officer "but, if she did he didn't write up a report on it or anything else."

She also claims refinery inspections by the state Department of Environmental Conservation for the state and the federal Environmental Protection Agency may have been skewed because refinery personnel treated the wells being tested with chemicals before the inspections took place.

Other allegations in Albrecht's letter include:

- That, last December, Mapco did find high levels of benzene in the refinery's potable water wells but failed to notify its employees of this until they had already read of it in the press.

- That Mapco, DEC and EPA testing of the water was questionable because the refinery's main water supply had been acidized and chlorinated prior to testing Nov. 20, 1986.

- That Mapco did not follow strict guidelines in pulling samples

from the potable water to test for benzene, a cancer-causing agent.

- That the drinking water at the refinery is being treated with a chemical on a daily basis.

- That the benzene being found may be coming from a leaking gasoline storage tank, because no benzene was extracted from TAPS oil at the refinery until October 1985.

- That 10 to 14 inches of ice has formed in the refinery's containment dikes, jeopardizing the integrity of the dikes.

- That 55-gallon drums of hazardous materials and unknown substances, some of them rusted and leaking, are improperly stored in the refinery's blend building.

- That the refinery has been placing "off spec products"—including lead, benzene, toluenes, acids and corrosive materials—into the holding tank which contains oil to be returned to the TAPS.

Wright said Mapco had no knowledge of benzene traces in any of its wells until mid-December 1986 and "as soon as we found out we notified our employees and set up special programs to make sure they had clean water. Her claim that we didn't notify the employees couldn't be farther from the truth."

He said the refinery uses hard

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska.



BUKI WRIGHT  
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water which causes mineral caking and buildup on the inside of the pipes. "We did acidize the pipes to get rid of the residue on the inside of the pipes," Wright said, "but it was a temporary procedure during which we set up a separate system so the employees could wash their hands and have drinking water."

He said if Albrecht's allegations of benzene in the water were true, the acidization would not have removed the benzene from the water supply. "We have had traces of benzene in two of our sampling wells, but not in any of our drinking wells," Wright said. "Her allegations about benzene in the water when we knew of it and our not notifying our employees are totally false, totally untrue."

One source said Albrecht is preparing to file an Occupational Health and Safety Discrimination complaint with the state Labor Department, but neither Albrecht nor Cook would discuss the matter.

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# Former Mapco employee asks labor secretary for help

By BILL KELDER  
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Saturday, April 18, 1987—7

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska



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# State reports no harm to pipeline

By PATTI EPLER

Daily News reporter Anch., Daily News 4-7-77

If hazardous chemicals were injected into the trans-Alaska pipeline from a North Pole refinery, they have caused no harm to the \$9 billion line, according to the state Division of Oil and Gas.

The state Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have been investigating allegations that MAPCO Petroleum Inc. disposed of thousands of gallons of hazardous waste by injecting it into the pipeline. The transportation, storage and disposal of hazardous waste is strictly regulated by federal law and the agencies have been trying to determine if MAPCO has violated that law.

MAPCO officials have said the company has not put hazardous waste into the pipeline. Because of public concern over the safety of the pipeline, DEC asked the oil and gas division to review technical data provided by DEC and by Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. — the pipeline's operator — to assess whether the pipeline, its pump stations or other facilities were in imminent danger.

Oil companies that own the pipeline had

said the injection of volatile chemicals could endanger lives and cause serious damage to the pipeline facilities and refineries that process North Slope crude. The 800-mile pipeline carries about 20 percent of the oil produced in the United States. Taxes and royalties on that oil provide about 70 percent of the state's income.

Kate Fortney, an engineer with the oil and gas division, said Monday she reviewed analyses of crude oil samples done by Alyeska and did not see any indication of substances that could harm the pipeline.

Fortney said DEC also asked her to speculate on potential harm to the pipeline if certain chemicals were injected into the line.

"They said here are these chemicals lying around and if they were injected into the pipeline, what would happen," Fortney said. She emphasized that DEC did not say the chemicals were injected but simply wanted to know the likely outcome if they were put into the line.

Fortney said she devised a worst-case scenario using DEC's information. She did some basic calculations and concluded the chemicals

would have been so diluted in the 1.9 million barrels of crude that flow daily through the pipeline that they would have little, if any, effect on the line.

Her calculations showed that, using the figures given by DEC, the chemicals would have been barely detectable using conventional equipment, she said.

Fortney's review prompted the state to issue a press release last week which said, in part, "there is no evidence of injections occurring which could have affected either the safety or the performance of the pipeline in any measurable way."

The federal government is continuing to investigate possible legal violations of the hazardous waste law. Last month, DEC conducted a surprise inspection of the refinery after receiving information that chemicals were being disposed of in the pipeline.

DEC has given its report of the investigation to EPA, which will conduct the rest of the investigation. EPA officials have said it likely will be at least several months before the investigation is finished and the agency's findings are made public.

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## EPA holds DEC Mapco report

The state Department of Environmental Conservation's report of its hazardous waste inspection at Mapco Petroleum Co.'s North Pole refinery has been passed to the federal Environmental Protection Agency in Anchorage, but the EPA is placing the report on a confidential status.

"At this point, about all I can say is that we have the state report in hand," said Al Ewing of EPA's Anchorage office this morning. "The report continues to be labeled 'enforcement-confidential'," he said.

Last month, the state and federal agencies began to take a closer look at the refinery as the result of allegations they received that the refinery may be producing hazardous wastes and may have put some of those wastes into the trans-Alaska pipeline system.

Mapco has denied placing any hazardous wastes into the pipeline. Company officials did acknowledge two weeks ago the shipment of about 30 barrels of waste Outside for proper disposal. The waste in six of those barrels did prove to contain some hazardous materials, the officials said at the time.

Shipment of the barrels took place with the DEC's knowledge.

Last June, Mapco began an internal process to add an environmental engineer to its staff. The company has recently been running advertisements to hire a person for this position. As such, the engineer would become an in-house environmental specialist for Mapco, helping it remain in compliance with various environmental laws and regulations, according to company officials.

Ewing said the state's report is being reviewed by the Anchorage EPA office, and will be sent to EPA's Region X office in Seattle for further review by the federal agency's hazardous waste compliance officers.

6-Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Friday, March 27, 1987

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# DEC seeks 2nd opinion on pipeline

By PATTI EPLER  
Daily News reporter

State and federal environmental officials said Wednesday the trans-Alaska pipeline does not appear to be in any danger from the possible injection of hazardous materials at a North Pole refinery.

But to get a better answer, the state Department of Environmental Conservation will ask the state Division of Oil and Gas to review its findings, a DEC official said Wednesday.

The DEC and the federal Environmental Protection Agency are investigating allegations that thousands of gallons of hazardous waste were pumped into the pipeline by MAPCO Petroleum Inc., which operates the refinery near Fairbanks.

MAPCO officials have said their company is not putting hazardous waste into the pipeline.

Until Wednesday, the two agencies had been unwilling to respond to concerns, particularly on the part of major oil companies, that the \$9 billion pipeline, its pump stations and Outside refineries could be seriously damaged if volatile substances were in fact being injected into the pipeline.

Two weeks ago, at the EPA's request, the DEC conducted a surprise inspection of the MAPCO facility, to check on the allegations.

Because the investigation could lead to enforcement action, even charges against the company, the EPA and DEC won't release details that could compromise the investigation. Neither will reveal what type of information has been collected so far, including whether any samples of substances have been taken for analysis.

Also, the DEC and EPA have said they did not have the expertise or the responsi-

bility to determine whether the pipeline was in danger. The agencies also said they were not willing to share information gained through an inspection of MAPCO's operation with the oil companies or the public until the investigation is finished, which likely will take at least several months.

But on Wednesday, officials with both agencies acknowledged that, so far, they have seen nothing that would indicate the pipeline is being threatened.

"The focus of the investigation is not the safety of the pipeline," said Al Ewing, head of the EPA in Alaska. "However, we have seen nothing that would indicate the pipeline is in danger..."

Amy Kyle, deputy commissioner of the DEC, said the investigation of MAPCO involves whether the facility has violated any environmental regulations.

But, "the information that we have available to us does not indicate that there is any threat to the pipeline or people who are working along the pipeline," she said.

The DEC will ask the oil and gas division to review its information and "determine whether they share that view or have another view," Kyle said.

Unlike the DEC, the oil and gas division does have the technical expertise to judge whether the safety of the pipeline is at issue, she said.

Kyle said the DEC hoped to turn the information over to the oil and gas division by today, but did not know when her department would get an answer back.

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Thursday, 19 Mar 87  
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# EPA, DEC keep mum on pipeline

By PATTI EPLER  
Daily News reporter

Is the \$9 billion trans-Alaska pipeline threatened by the possible injection of hazardous chemicals by a North Pole refinery?

Neither state nor federal environmental officials will answer that question, despite concerns raised by major oil companies. The companies are worried that lives could be in danger and serious damage could be done to the pipeline, its pump stations and refineries Outside.

Both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state Department of Environmental Conservation say it will likely be several months before they release any information at all about an investigation into whether MAPCO Petroleum Inc. has illegally pumped thousands of gallons of hazardous waste into the pipeline.

MAPCO officials have said hazardous waste is not being injected into the pipeline at their facility.

The EPA and DEC are the

See E-2K Pr 2, MAPCO

## MAPCO: State and federal agencies investigate possible hazardous waste in pipeline

Continued from Page A-1

only agencies investigating the allegations. At least three of the pipeline's owners — Atlantic Richfield Co., Standard Oil Co. and Exxon Corp. — say they are waiting for the EPA and DEC to tell them what substances, if any, have been put into the pipeline.

But officials with both agencies said Tuesday they will not share their findings with the oil companies. Moreover, officials of both agencies say it is not their job to determine if the pipeline is in danger.

The public "should not be looking to us to tell them what's going on with the pipeline," said Al Ewing, assistant regional administrator for the EPA in Alaska.

He suggested that the pipeline's owners should be doing their own investigation if

they are concerned about the safety of their \$8 billion investment.

"I think that's where the answer has to come from," Ewing said. "They have the investment."

And even though the EPA and DEC have information essential to the question of pipeline safety, Ewing said any information they gather will be "enforcement confidential" — that is, the agencies will not make it public until they have concluded an investigation that could lead to an enforcement action against MAPCO. Ewing said it could be months before the investigation is finished.

The 800-mile pipeline carries nearly 2 million barrels of North Slope crude every day from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez. It is loaded aboard tankers for shipment to refineries in the Lower 48.

North Slope crude accounts for about 20 percent of the oil produced in the United States. The pipeline is the economic backbone of Alaska, which depends on the sale of the oil for about 70 percent of its income.

Last week, spokesmen for Arco, Exxon and Standard said the companies considered the allegations against Mapco serious because of possible damage to the pipeline and its facilities if volatile substances are injected. Lives could also be in danger, according to Arco.

Company officials said it was their understanding the DEC had taken samples of substances being put into the line and that those samples were being analyzed. Since the regulatory agencies were already investigating, the companies had not taken their own samples of the

"That information is EPA's," he said of the report.

Dietrick noted that the investigation by the DEC and EPA focuses on whether federal laws governing the handling of hazardous waste have been violated.

Information collected by the DEC may not be what the oil companies need to answer questions about pipeline safety, he said.

"We're an environmental agency and we don't deal with pipeline integrity," Dietrick said. "It's way beyond our expertise to say whether (there are) pipeline integrity problems."

Meanwhile, MAPCO on Sunday shipped about 30 drums of waste material from the North Pole refinery to an authorized disposal facility in Oregon. Dietrick said about six of those drums contained hazardous waste as defined

Arco spokesman Scott Loll said Tuesday his company still is waiting for both the DEC and EPA to share their findings with Arco.

"Basically, we feel that surely if there are any toxic or harmful substances being injected into the line we would expect DEC or EPA to inform us immediately," Loll said.

Larry Dietrick, northern regional supervisor for the DEC in Fairbanks, said the state agency has been asked by the EPA not to disclose any information about the investigation to anyone.

Dietrick would not say whether DEC investigators even took samples of questionable substances for analysis.

He said the DEC hopes to submit its report to the EPA later this week.

by federal law.

Until the allegations that hazardous waste was being disposed of in the pipeline were raised earlier this month, the DEC and EPA did not consider MAPCO to be a facility that generated or stored hazardous waste, which is strictly regulated by federal law.

Buki Wright, a MAPCO vice president in Fairbanks, said Tuesday the waste shipped out a few days ago came from a holding pond that was cleaned out last summer. The muddy residue in the pond contained oily material, he said.

Two weeks ago, Wright said the refinery had shipped waste Outside on several occasions in the past. More recently, Wright said he was mistaken and that this weekend was the first time the company has shipped any hazardous waste.

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Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Wednesday, March 11, 1987-

# State DEC, EPA taking time in Mapco waste investigation

By BILL KELDER  
Staff Writer

Neither the state Department of Environmental Conservation nor the federal Environmental Protection Agency is talking much about their investigation of Mapco Petroleum Co.'s North Pole refinery. Late Friday, both agencies

issued statements confirming they were investigating allegations the refinery may be improperly producing, storing or disposing of hazardous materials.

On Monday, a Mapco official denied the allegations.

DEC said it had been asked by EPA to conduct an inspection at the

refinery, but the report of that inspection will remain confidential until it has been forwarded to EPA and that agency has had time to review it. "We may have something to say in about two weeks," said EPA's Al Ewing Friday.

In the meantime, EPA has asked DEC to keep the matter confidential and the state agency has agreed to this. Officials at both agencies cautioned that the allegations do not necessarily mean Mapco has indeed violated any federal hazardous waste laws. That will be determined by EPA's review of the DEC inspection.

A problem for both agencies is the federal hazardous waste law itself. Known as the Resource Conservation and Reclamation Act, or RCRA, the law excludes the exploration, development and pro-

duction of oil from its provisions. While this does not apply to refineries, there are certain areas of refinery activities that are excluded from RCRA, according to Jeff Mach, hazardous waste specialist for the Fairbanks DEC office.

Among these are hazardous wastes that are recycled or re-refined. For example, "hazardous wastes burned for energy recovery in boilers and industrial furnaces" are excluded from the law under federal regulations. Another exclusion is "used oil that exhibits one or more of the characteristics of hazardous waste but is recycled in some other manner than being burned." And there are other exclusions.

The EPA has responsibility for enforcing RCRA, says Mach. He said the DEC could take over this

enforcement responsibility, and has been instructed by the Legislature to do so, but while DEC prepares to apply for this, the enforcement of hazardous waste laws and regulations rests with EPA.

Under RCRA, the EPA has identified five specific wastes relating to refining that are considered hazardous if they are not properly handled. The five are: (1) dissolved air flotation float, (2) slop oil emulsion solids (leftovers from the refining process), (3) sludge from cleaning the heat exchanger bundle, (4) separator sludge, and (5) leaded tank bottoms (sludge build up in the bottom of tanks involving leaded products).

While Mach couldn't specifically talk about the Mapco situation, he could talk about the EPA's options with regard to refinery's in gener-

al. Should the EPA find a hazardous material or waste violation at a refinery—or any other business for that matter—it could issue a "notice of violation." The least stringent of the penalties it may issue, the notice requires a written response from a refinery on how it has cleaned up its hazardous material or waste problem, and it generally allows for follow-up inspections, according to Mach.

A fairly serious violation can result in EPA issuing a "consent order." Under the consent order, a violator admits responsibility for a hazard, agrees to pay for clean up as directed by EPA, and may include a fine. "It also is the kind of violation that the agency would want to closely monitor," Mach said.

At the next level, a hazardous

substance, material or waste problem that immediately endangers the environment could result in civil offense charges being filed with the courts by EPA. Finally, criminal charges could result if there's a clear and present danger to human health from a hazardous waste problem. Both the civil and criminal actions usually involve substantial fines and, in the case of criminal charges, may also result in imprisonment, Mach said.

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Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Monday, March 9, 1987

# Mapco says it didn't pump waste into line

## AP and staff reports

**NORTH POLE**—Mapco Petroleum's North Pole refinery has not pumped hazardous waste into the trans-Alaska oil pipeline, according to the company's local vice president.

"As far as I know, we are not putting hazardous waste or anything else that's not appropriate into the pipeline," said Buki Wright, vice president of Mapco Petroleum Inc.

State and federal environmental officials are investigating allegations that the refinery has illegally

produced, stored and disposed of hazardous waste by pumping it into into the pipeline.

"We have never shipped hazardous waste out of the refinery in any form," Wright said during a telephone call from San Diego this morning. "Beyond that, since there has been an investigation, I'd rather hold off on saying a whole lot more until I know what they are investigating."

Wright said officials of the state  
(See MAPCO, Back Page)

## MAPCO

(Continued from page 1)

Department of Environmental Conservation and the federal Environmental Protection Agency have visited the refinery to inspect the operation and question employees.

The DEC inspected the refinery Thursday evening and will soon forward its report to the EPA. Once the EPA receives the report, it will examine its findings to determine whether the allegations are accurate, and if so what actions are appropriate. The process could take two or more weeks. Larry Dietrick, DEC northern region director, was not available for comment this morning.

The investigation is based on information received from Virginia oil broker Charles Hamel and Bob Blake of the Cordova District Fishermen United. Both have been active in a two-year investigation of alleged pollution at the pipeline's marine terminal in Valdez.

According to Blake and Hamel, acids, solvents and other highly corrosive and flammable materials are being injected in the pipeline.

The introduction of potentially volatile substances into the hot stream of crude oil could be dangerous and cause substantial damage to the \$8 billion pipeline, according to the Atlantic Richfield Co., one of the pipeline owners.

An ARCO spokesman said the company has seen no evidence of hazardous waste in samples taken from the wastewater treatment plant in Valdez. Al Greenstein said the crude oil hasn't been sampled, but the company has seen nothing to indicate contamination by hazardous material.

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Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Saturday, March 7, 1987—9

## DEC, EPA investigating Mapco

Allegations that Mapco Petroleum Co.'s North Pole refinery is illegally producing, storing, and disposing hazardous wastes are being investigated by the state Department of Environmental Conservation and the federal Environmental Protection Agency, officials at both agencies confirmed Friday.

DEC and EPA officials said the

refinery does not hold a permit to legally store or dispose of hazardous materials under the Resource Conservation and Reclamation Act, and that the refinery has not reported any such materials to either DEC or EPA. They said among allegations under investigation is that Mapco may have disposed of hazardous wastes through the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System.

Neither agency identified the person or persons making the allegations.

"Basically, the EPA asked us to move up the timeline on our scheduled inspection of the refinery by about a week," said DEC northern regional director Larry Dietrick. "We conducted the inspection Thursday evening, but it will take a

(See MAPCO, Page 10)

### MAPCO

(Continued from page 1)

few days to get the report together to send to EPA."

Once EPA receives the report, it will examine its findings and determine whether the allegations are accurate and, if so, which actions are appropriate, he said, adding that the process could take two or more weeks.

One DEC official said the Fairbanks office's phones had been "ringing off the hook" with calls from reporters around the country asking about the hazardous waste

allegations. "All we can do is tell them we're investigating the matter. It will be up to EPA to decide if any violations have occurred and what action should be taken," he said.

Officials at both agencies said they could not comment on what types of hazardous wastes may be being produced at the refinery until all the reports are complete and have been carefully reviewed.

Mapco's top Fairbanks officials are in San Diego on business. Efforts to reach them by telephone were unsuccessful.

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Anchorage Daily News

Saturday, March 7, 1987

## State investigates allegations of hazardous waste in pipeline

By PATTI EPLER  
Daily News reporter

State and federal environmental officials are investigating allegations that thousands of gallons of hazardous waste have been pumped into the trans-Alaska pipeline over the past few months from a North Pole refinery.

Investigators with the state Department of Environmental Conservation conducted an unannounced inspection of the MAPCO Petroleum Inc. refinery near Fairbanks Thursday. Larry Dietrick, supervisor of DEC's northern regional office, said Friday

the state was looking for possible violations of federal laws that govern the storage of hazardous waste and how it is disposed of.

The state also was given information that toxic and hazardous substances were being pumped to a line that MAPCO uses to return crude oil to the pipeline, he said.

The introduction of potentially volatile hazardous substances into the hot stream of crude oil could be dangerous, and cause substantial damage to the \$8 billion pipeline and its facilities, according to the Atlantic Richfield Co., an

owner of the pipeline.

The 800-mile pipeline carries about 1.9 million barrels of oil a day from the North Slope to Valdez where the oil is loaded on tankers, mostly bound for Lower 48 refineries. The pipeline provides about 20 percent of the oil produced in the U.S. The state gets about 70 percent of its income from North Slope oil production.

MAPCO already is under DEC scrutiny because of a 100,000-gallon oil spill that has contaminated groundwa-

See Back Page. REFINERY

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## REFINERY: Allegations of hazardous waste in line

Continued from Page A-1

ter at the refinery. High levels of benzene, a carcinogen, have been found in wells there.

On Friday, Bukl Wright, a MAPCO vice president, said, "As far as I know, we are not putting hazardous waste or anything else that's not appropriate into the pipeline."

DEC was asked to conduct the inspection by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA had received its information from Bob Blake of the Cordova District Fishermen United and Charles Hamel, a Virginian resident. Both have been deeply involved in a two-year investigation of Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., the oil company consortium which operates the pipeline and its Valdez shipping terminal.

However, according to a DEC report, for the last few months the agency has been concerned that hazardous waste was being pumped into the pipeline at the refinery and had scheduled an inspection for April.

That investigation was stepped up after Blake and Hamel provided further information to EPA, which then asked DEC move up its inspection.

The substances alleged to be reinjecting into the pipeline include acids, solvents and other materials that are highly corrosive and highly flammable, according to letters written by Blake and Hamel to the heads of several of the major oil companies that make up Alyeska.

A spokesman for Atlantic Richfield Co., one of Alaska's two largest oil producers, said Arco has seen no evidence of hazardous waste in samples of wastewater from the Valdez plant. The company has not sampled the crude oil but has seen nothing to indicate the presence of hazardous materials in the crude stream, said Al Greenstein, an Arco spokesman in Los Angeles.

"No one is more interested than we are in getting to the bottom of this," said Greenstein.

Arco Transportation Co. president H.E. Bond wrote Blake and Hamel a letter earlier this week asking for more information. The alleged actions, "if proven to be true, are likely to endanger human lives and cause harm to the environment and important facilities," he said.

Dietrick of DEC said investigators did find that substances were being put into the MAPCO line that returns oil to the pipeline but wouldn't know until tests were done whether the materials were hazardous waste or not.

"We don't know if there's a problem yet," he said.

DEC will prepare a report of its findings to give to EPA. Dietrick said he hoped to have the report finished next week.

It will then be up to EPA to determine whether any violations of federal hazardous waste laws have taken place.

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) requires that substances classified as hazardous waste be dealt with in a much stricter fashion than other waste materials. For instance, RCRA wastes must be carefully packaged and shipped to approved disposal facilities outside. Generators of the waste as well as transporters must follow strict reporting requirements to account for the waste and where it has been disposed of.

MAPCO's Wright said there have been occasions in the past when MAPCO did collect waste the company considered to be hazardous and have had shipped outside. The waste was part of a production process no longer in use.

Wright, who works out of Fairbanks office rather than at the refinery itself, said it is his understanding there are "some things" stored in drums at the refinery, but he couldn't say on Friday whether they were hazardous wastes as defined by RCRA.

Although DEC and EPA reacted with some urgency to the allegations made this week by Blake and Hamel, both agencies have known for at least two months that it was likely hazardous waste was being injected into the pipeline.

A January DEC report to EPA included a single paragraph that said information provided by the "owner/operator" of MAPCO during interviews indicated "hazardous waste is likely injected/disposed of into the trans-Alaska pipeline."

Steve Torok, who oversees EPA's RCRA program in Alaska, said he read the report when it was given to him but "I did not feel there was enough information (in the single paragraph) to substantiate whether there was or was not a problem."

Torok said he did not call DEC to get more information. "It was premature and preliminary at best," Torok said.

Amy Kyle, deputy commissioner of DEC, said, "I don't think we felt we had an imminent problem. I think we felt we had an issue that needed to be researched and resolved."

The state planned to deal with the matter, she said, and already had scheduled an inspection.

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Fairbanks  
News-Miner

Tuesday, January 6, 1987

## Mapco spill cleanup resumes

NORTH POLE—After a brief delay over the weekend, Mapco Petroleum Co. has resumed cleanup of Thursday's oil spill at the company's refinery here.

Snowstorms on the Dalton Highway had impeded a vacuum truck early Saturday out of Prudhoe Bay, but the vehicle has since arrived on-site to begin sucking up hard-to-reach portions of the spill, officials said.

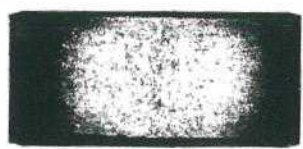
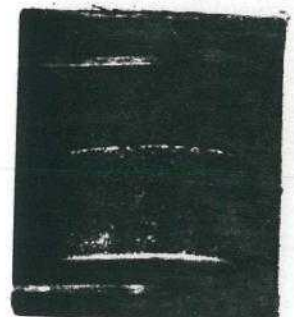
Mapco officials estimate that some 12,000 to 15,000 gallons of semi-hardened diesel fuel called "hago" spilled on the refinery site early in the morning of New Year's Day.

Buki Wright, Mapco's vice president in Alaska, issued a

press release Monday, which estimated the cleanup of the spill would take "anywhere from a few days to a week to finish."

"It's unfortunate that this happened, but Mother Nature is sometimes hard to predict," Wright said in the release. "We are making a complete review of the situation in order to prevent this from happening again."

The fuel spill occurred as refinery workers were transferring diesel fuel from a tank through a line. State Department of Environment officials are investigating the spill and monitoring cleanup efforts.



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*Fairbanks N-Miner 1-4-87*  
**Snowstorms delaying  
cleanup of diesel fuel**

By JOHN CREED  
Staff Writer

**NORTH POLE**—Snowstorms on the Dalton Highway have delayed a vacuum truck out of Prudhoe Bay that will help clean up about 15,000 gallons of diesel fuel spilled New Year's Day at Mapco Petroleum Co.'s refinery here.

"We still have a good bit of that to clean up," Buki Wright, Mapco's vice president-Alaska, said late Saturday afternoon.

Crews have apparently cleaned up as much as they can without the special truck.

"We're now waiting for the vacuum truck, which was to be here at midday (Saturday)," Wright said. "But there was snow

around Livengood, so they were waiting for a snowplow to clear the Haul Road so it could get through," he said.

Officials were expecting the truck to arrive at the refinery late Saturday night.

Areas already cleaned up "look really good," Wright said. He estimated that once the vacuum truck arrives, it will take between four and 10 days to clean up areas under hard-to-reach pipe racks.

"All the areas that were around any equipment have been cleaned up completely," he said.

The fuel spill occurred Thursday as refinery workers were transferring diesel fuel from a tank through

(See DIESEL, Page 3)

## DIESEL

(Continued from page 1)

a line. A pump wasn't functioning, so the fuel overflowed onto the ground, officials said.

Mapco, a Lower 48-based oil conglomerate, leases land from the state to operate its North Pole refinery.

The original estimates of as much as 20,000 gallons of spilled diesel fuel are not accurate, said Wright, who instead estimated the spill between 12,000 and 15,000 gallons.

"Some of the product went onto concrete pads and concrete troughs, which all had drains, so that should not be considered a spill," Wright said.

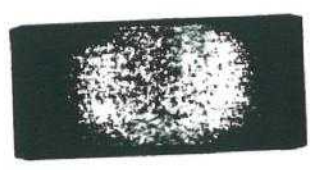
State officials have said that environmental damage does not seem likely from this spill because the type of fuel spilled, called "Hago." It gels or "sets up" at 45 degrees Fahrenheit, so it is not likely to seep into the ground, they said.

The Thursday spill is considered the largest single spill Mapco has had at its North Pole plant, according to Wright.

Other spills, however, have been larger, but occurred gradually over extended periods of time. One spill is estimated at more than 100,000 gallons and has not yet been completely recovered.

The state Department of Environmental Conservation issued Mapco a compliance order a few weeks ago to speed up recovery operations from that spill, of which tens of thousands of gallons have already been recovered.

The extent of environmental damage, if any, is not known, although one DEC official reported that contamination of Mapco's own drinking wells "seems probable."



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# Spills continue to plague Mapco

By CONNIE OEHRING  
Staff Writer

NORTH POLE—A New Year's Day accident that spilled up to 20,000 gallons of diesel fuel at Mapco Petroleum's North Pole refinery may be the largest single spill in the refinery's history.

"This is, if not the largest, one of the largest single spills we have had," Buki Wright, Mapco's Alaska vice president, said Friday afternoon.

Mapco was already working under a compliance order from the state Department of Environmental Conservation to recover an estimated 100,000 gallons of fuel that has leaked into the ground. But that amount has accumulated over at least four years from a series of small leaks and spills. Another large spill discovered in 1980, involving 60,000 gallons of jet fuel that leaked from two storage tanks, occurred over three years. The refinery began operating in 1977.

The most recent spill occurred early Thursday morning as refinery workers made a routine inventory check on a tank holding a type of number four diesel called Hago, a commercial/industrial turbine fuel.

They also checked for water, which is often found at the bottom of the tanks during the winter, when condensation is likely to occur. A check of the Hago tank showed about two inches of water. A worker turned on a valve set in the bottom of the tank that is used specifically to draw water out. When the system works, water is drawn off, collected in a sump and pumped to a holding tank, where it is separated from the oil. The oil is then "reprocessed."

But when the operator opened the valves, nothing happened. He guessed there was an obstruction in the line that would give way if he left the valves on. He left them slightly open and returned at 3:30 a.m. to check. There was still little or no flow through the line. Another check was not made until 6 a.m., when workers found the spill.

Wright said the spill occurred after the fuel started flowing. The pump that draws liquid from the sump and passes it on to the holding tank was running, but the discharge line was frozen. Once the flow started, oil and water filled the sump and backed up, spreading in a ribbon about 20 feet wide and 400 feet long, mostly under a rack of pipes running parallel to the row of tanks.

Hago is a heavy fuel that "sets up" or jells at 45 degrees Fahrenheit. It was warm, and therefore liquid, when it left the pipe, but began to jell as it cooled. Mapco workers using pumps managed to collect much of the spilled fuel before it solidified, and some of it was collected through drains into the sump system. Wright estimated 12,000 to 15,000 gallons remained on the ground, but some of it had already been cleaned up by Friday afternoon.

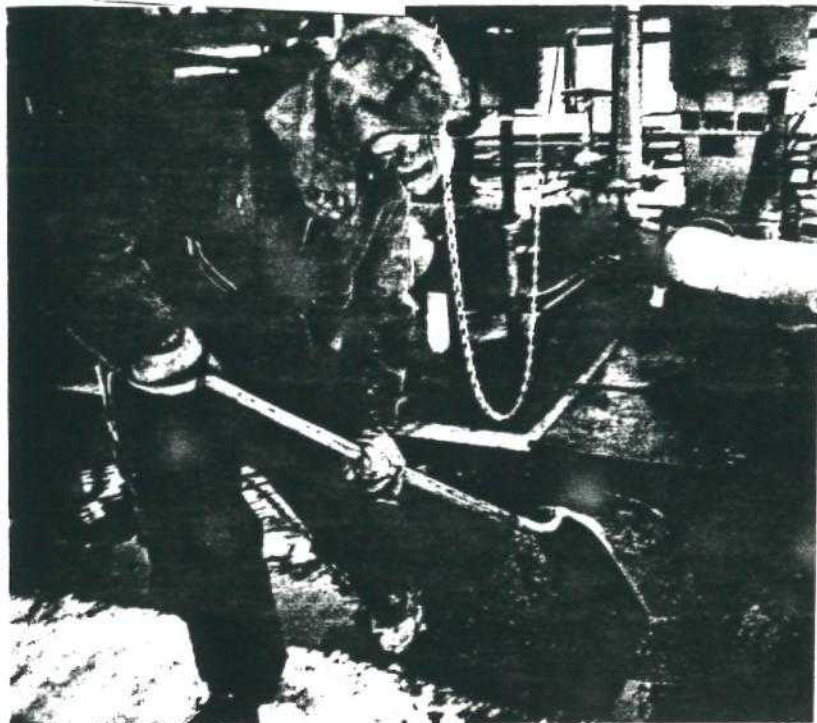
What remains now is a thick, yellow, gelatinous sheet, from two to five inches deep, which workers are cleaning up with shovels. They are also spraying the fuel with hot water to melt it and suck it up with a pump. Much of the spill took place on concrete "skids" that lie under the pipes and are edged with curbs and fitted with drains to collect spilled fuel. The fuel overflowed the curbs, but is contained between an asphalt access road and an earth dike between the tank and the pipe rack.

**DEC officials are keeping a close eye on the clean-up procedure, but do not feel the spill presents any imminent hazard.**

Crews of seven to 10 workers spent most of New Year's Day and Friday cleaning up the spill, and Wright expects a vacuum truck owned by an oilfield service company to arrive from Prudhoe Bay sometime today. Clean-up using the truck should take four to 10 days, Wright said, but he does not yet know what it will cost.

Meanwhile, DEC officials are keeping a close eye on the clean-up procedure, but do not feel the spill presents any imminent hazard. Because of the fuel's near-solid state, it is unlikely to seep into the ground, according to DEC oil spill investigator John Janssen. There is small danger of fire, Wright said, as it takes a temperature of at least 160 degrees to ignite the fuel.

"We will review everything, all our procedures," Wright said. "Nobody wants it to happen again, but no one could have predicted it."



**CLEAN UP**—Dave McKinnell, left, and Cris Jones, both operations personnel at Mapco, clean up the spilled oil

from around the refinery's



**SPILL CHECK**—Buki Wright, Mapco's Alaska vice president, tests the firmness of the spilled oil around a pump at the refinery Friday afternoon. Charles Mason/News-Miner

FILE COPY

IMAGES



Frozen line blamed

# 20,000 gallons of diesel spilled at Mapco

By CONNIE OEHRING  
News-Miner Bureau  
NORTH POLE—Up to 20,000 gallons of diesel fuel spilled onto the ground at Mapco Petroleum's North Pole Refinery Thursday morning when a pump discharge line froze in a pipe that was carrying diesel fuel from a storage tank.

"We were moving product from a tank through a line, and the pump wasn't working so the product overflowed onto the ground," said Buki Wright, Mapco's Alaska vice president.

The spill occurred sometime between 3:30 a.m. and 6 a.m. New Year's Day, Wright said.

"It happened during a routine

procedure. It was the kind of thing where you open a valve and then go on about other things," he said. Refinery workers checked the valve about 3:30 a.m. and did not return until 6 a.m., when the spill was discovered, he said. He could not estimate how long the valve had been overflowing.

Wright said refinery workers called

the state Department of Environmental Conservation about 6:30 a.m., leaving a message on an answering machine. John Janssen, DEC oil spill investigator, said he was notified at home about 8:45 a.m., within the required five hour time limit of the spill's occurrence.

A Daily News-Miner reporter and photographer were turned

away at the refinery gate this morning. Officials cited "company policy," but Wright later said he would allow photographs.

Both Wright and Janssen said the spill is not hazardous because the type of fuel spilled, a number four diesel fuel called Hago, "sets up," or jells, at 45 degrees.

"When it spilled it was liquid be-

cause it was warm," said Wright. "But as it cooled off it jelled. It didn't stay liquid enough to seep into the ground or to spread. I guess what I'm saying is, we're lucky it was that product because it will be easier to clean up."

A crew of eight to 10 men spent most of New Year's Day trying various clean-up techniques, Wright

added. "It had set up so much, we were shoveling it up," he said. "We were also trying a method where you warm it up and melt it and pump it up."

Wright said Mapco has hired an oilfield service company in Anchorage, which has a special vacuum truck in Prudhoe Bay designed spe-

(See SPILL, Back Page)



## Daily News - Min

Your Locally Owned Independent Daily Newspaper

FAIRBANKS, ALASKA, FRIDAY, JANUARY 2, 1987

VOL. LXXXV, No. 1

### SPILL

(Continued from page 1)  
cifically to clean up oil spills. He expects the truck to arrive in North Pole by mid-day Saturday. "We estimate it will take four to 10 days with that."

Meanwhile, the refinery will continue its own clean-up efforts, which are effective but slow, Wright said.

Wright estimated the spill at 15,000 to 16,000 gallons, and said he believed that is accurate to within 1,000 gallons. Janssen estimated the amount at 16,000 to 20,000 gallons. The spill covers an area about 20 feet wide and 400 feet long, and is about two inches deep, Janssen said. "It's similar to Vaseline petroleum jelly in color and appearance, and it's sitting right on top of the snow or ice," he said. "It's confined and it's not going any place."

Wright said the spill is bounded on one side by an asphalt road within the refinery grounds and on the other by a dike.

"The valve was over a concrete containment area that has curbs around it, but that overflowed and it got onto the ground around that," Wright said.

Janssen and DEC regional environmental supervisor Larry Dietrick visited the refinery Thursday, and Janssen said he intended

to return today to inspect clean-up procedures.

"It's just going to take some money and bodies to clean up this stuff," Janssen said. "If I compared it to other petroleum products, it's probably easier to clean up than anything else. It's just messy."

Mapco officials are currently working under a compliance order from the DEC to clean up an estimated 100,000 gallons of oil leaked into the ground over the past several years from a variety of small leaks and spills. The refinery has installed at least 15 recovery wells and 20 monitor wells. Dietrick said the compliance order will also apply to the recent spill because the same monitoring system may be used to detect potential groundwater contamination from residual fuel that may seep into the ground.

"The chances of that are very remote," he said. "The potential for groundwater contamination depends a good deal on the efficiency of the clean-up. The clean-up to date, the actions they've taken, we consider acceptable. We're not taking any action at this point."

"It bothers me that this did happen, and what they're going to do about it to prevent it happening again," Janssen said. "They have had their share of spills. This shouldn't have happened."

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# FRONT Mapco spill pollution 'probable'

By JOHN CREED  
Staff Writer

**NORTH POLE**—State officials now fear that contamination of drinking water "seems probable" on the North Pole refinery site from the more than 100,000 gallons of oil that Mapco Petroleum Co. has spilled there over the past few years.

In a letter dated last Friday to state Rep. Mike Davis, D-Fairbanks, Department of Environmental Conservation environmental engineer Stan Justice said tests so far show no evidence of contamination in Mapco's wells. Mapco, a Lower 48-based oil conglomerate, leases land at the refinery from the state.

"But due to close proximity to high volume spills, well contamination seems probable," Justice told Davis, who pushed a bill on hazardous wastes through the Legislature last session. Davis also chairs the House Special Committee on Oil and Gas.

"There are no other drinking water wells in the immediate vicinity" of Mapco's oil spills, added Justice, who categorized Mapco's spill as a "high level of contamination" in a long list of contaminated sites in northern Alaska.

"We're saying there's a well on the premises in close proximity and it seems that it well may ultimately become affected," said Bob Martin, DEC's acting northern regional supervisor, but he envisions no other North Pole wells becoming contaminated.

DEC officials do not know to what extent the rest of North Pole's water table and the nearby Tanana River are endangered, but say the potential is not great.

North Mayor Carleta Lewis, however, is not so sure.

"In informal conversations with Mapco employees, I have a tenden-

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## MAPCO

(Continued from page 1)

cy to think it's worse than what we've been told—of course, I have no proof of that," she told the News-Miner. "One of the people that works over there was laughing one day about the story in the paper. He said, 'Gosh, if you only knew.'"

Lewis believes private landholdings and businesses near the oil-spill site could be in danger.

"They are not in the city, so they have wells," she said. "All we can go on is what they told us, and DEC has never told us anything."

Mapco officials, meanwhile, reiterated earlier public statements that no environmental dangers exist from the spills.

"I don't know anything about the letter (to Davis), so I couldn't comment on it," said Buki Wright, Mapco's vice president-Alaska.

"From everything I've heard, there isn't any contamination and probably won't be," Wright said, who told the News-Miner last month that the oil spills pose no danger to North Pole's water table, which includes the refinery site.

Mapco's oil spills are close to the surface, he said, and the company's drinking water well is 60 to 70 feet underground and tested regularly.

State officials estimate that more than 100,000 gallons of various oil products had spilled or leaked into the ground before Mapco began pumping out the wastes earlier this year. The refinery's perimeter is now ringed with up to 20 monitor wells and about 15 recovery wells, officials said.

"If their recovery efforts continue to be successful, the amount of oil left in the ground may never be of a sufficient volume to reach the (Mapco) well," Martin said.

DEC said Mapco has recovered up to 60,000 gallons of spilled oil in recent months from leaking concrete "sumps," which collect waste water, oil and other waste liquids. Other spills stem from leaking storage tanks, leaking pumps and inadequate handling procedures.

Wright said Mapco has not been trying to downplay the issue.

"The problem is not a minor problem," he said. "We've been

dealing with it for a long time. The problem's been dealt with and now we're dealing with the consequences. We have been very open with the DEC and will continue to be very open with the DEC."

DEC's Martin said potential pollution in the Tanana River is not great.

"But you can't see under the ground and there could be geological channels leading to the river, he said, adding that the issue remains "in the realm of the unknown."

Mapco was threatened with a compliance order last August after DEC said the company "dragged its feet" on clean-up efforts, which Mapco denied.

DEC officials cannot say if Mapco has repaired all its leaks yet but an audit is underway to find that out.

"I can't say at this point that every leak has been corrected," he said. "Not all the repair work has been done—that's what we're trying to hash out with the company right now. Over the long term, maybe even more corrective action is necessary to make sure it doesn't leak again."

Martin said shutting down the plant has never been discussed.

"It's not a warranted action due to the nature of the discussions and actions so far," he said.

Lewis, North Pole's mayor, said Wright "came down and talked to me after the article came out in the newspaper," which was Oct. 30.

"He (Wright) said Mapco is absolutely not contaminating anything and they are cleaning everything up," she said.

Nevertheless, Lewis said she posed several questions to Mapco about her city's environmental concerns in a recent letter, which Wright promised to address soon.

"I guess that's all right," she said. "I'd like to have all these questions answered. They told me absolutely nobody would be contaminated, including Mapco. I want to know what happens down the road, if somebody ends up with oil in their back yard or with a contaminated well. Who takes responsibility for that? I don't think anybody should be able to contaminate anyone's well."

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IMAGED



# Senator calls for MAPCO investigation

By PATTI EPLER  
Daily News reporter

An Ohio senator on Friday called for a congressional probe into allegations that MAPCO Petroleum Inc. has been putting hazardous waste into the trans-Alaska pipeline, accusations that witnesses have been intimidated and that the state has compromised a federal investigation.

Sen. Howard Metzenbaum's request for a General Accounting Office report prompted an angry response from Gov. Steve Cowper, who didn't take kindly to Metzenbaum's suggestion that state environmental officials have undermined an ongoing investigation because of a "close relationship" with MAPCO officials.

Metzenbaum's allegations of lax enforcement "are misinformed at best and flat out irresponsible at worst," Cowper said. "Sen. Metzenbaum frequently criticizes what we do in Alaska without complete information. That appears to be the case here."

Meanwhile, in a letter dated Friday, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said it believes the North Pole refinery has accumulated and stored hazardous waste without a permit and out of compliance with most treatment and disposal standards.

MAPCO officials have denied disposing of hazardous waste — strictly regulated by federal law — into the pipeline. In recent weeks, MAPCO has obtained an EPA permit to ship some waste to a licensed disposal facility outside.

In March, state Department of Environmental Conservation investigators, acting on EPA's request, conducted a surprise inspection of the MAPCO refinery south of Fairbanks. Information from the DEC inspection was the basis for EPA's findings in the letter sent to MAPCO Friday.

The inspection followed allegations by a Virginia oil broker, a Cordova fishermen's group and MAPCO employees that the refinery was disposing of hazardous waste by pumping it into the pipeline. Oil companies that own the \$9 billion pipeline were concerned that the injection of volatile substances could endanger lives and threaten the safety of the pipeline, the pump stations or even refineries that process the crude oil.

State officials concluded that if hazardous materials were being injected into the pipeline, they would be so diluted as to present little problem.



Metzenbaum

## MAPCO: Senator calls for investigation into allegations

Continued from Page C-1

A spokeswoman for Metzenbaum said Friday she was not aware that the state had come to that conclusion. She did not know if the senator or his staff knew of the state's review of the threat to the pipeline.

In a press release, Metzenbaum said, "Congress cannot allow MAPCO officials to resolve their toxic waste disposal problems by risking environmental damage, employee safety and damage to the industrial facilities of petroleum refiners downstream."

Metzenbaum, a Democrat, chairs a Senate subcommittee on energy regulation and conservation.

He also asked GAO to provide special protection for witnesses, citing allegations of witness intimidation.

"I understand at least one MAPCO employee has

tions that DEC's enforcement role was compromised by "its close relationship with MAPCO officials."

DEC Commissioner Dennis Kelso also denied assertions that the agency has been lax in its dealings with the refinery.

"We've been aggressive and appropriate in our enforcement," Kelso told the Associated Press on Friday. "Those kinds of allegations are absurd. Our work with MAPCO takes a great deal of time in our northern regional office."

Cowper noted that DEC has been keeping an eye on MAPCO for some time and has required cleanup of oil spills as well as an environmental audit of the facility.

In the letter to MAPCO, Charles Findley, EPA director of hazardous waste for this region, said the agency is continuing to evaluate information collected at the refin-

charged the company with discrimination and termination of employment as a result of that employee's cooperation with congressional investigators," he said. "We expect witnesses to cooperate fully with investigators knowing that their rights will be protected by Congress and the Department of Labor."

GAO, through its recently established Office of Special Investigations, already has been looking into the MAPCO affair. Several people, including state officials, said they were interviewed by GAO investigators several weeks ago, and asked if they would be willing to testify before a congressional committee.

Nancy Coffey, a Metzenbaum spokeswoman, said the GAO probe has been informal. Metzenbaum's action is a request for an official investigation, she said.

Metzenbaum also asked the GAO to investigate allega-

ery. But, he said, MAPCO has not complied with requirements governing management of recyclable material and has accumulated enough waste so that the refinery should be considered a generator of hazardous waste under the law.

The refinery also has stored "acutely toxic" and "characteristic waste" for more than 90 days without a permit and is "out of compliance with the majority of treatment and disposal standards," the letter said.

EPA asked for detailed information on recycling and neutralizing of hazardous materials, including placement of materials into the pipeline.

Al Ewing, assistant regional administrator for the EPA in Alaska, had no comment on Metzenbaum's call for a GAO investigation. He said EPA intends to continue its own investigation and should have more to say about the case in a week or two.

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